

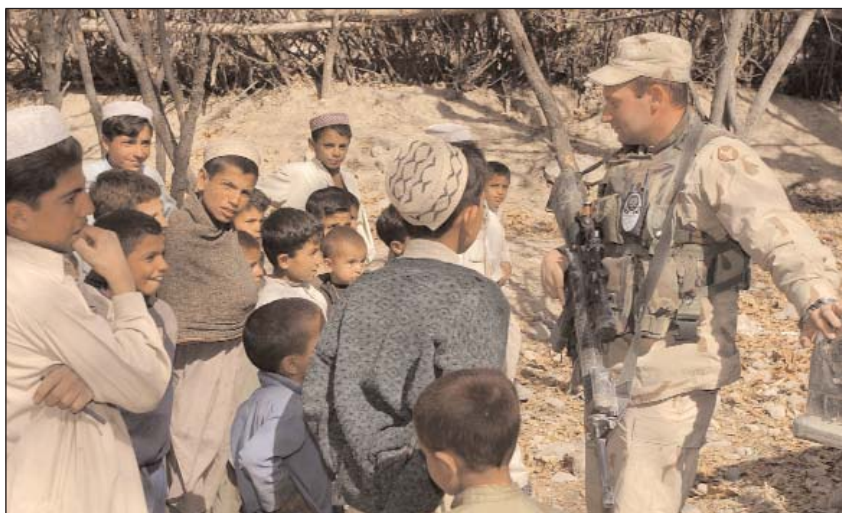
December 12, 2004

Freedom

Watch

Serving Coalition forces in Afghanistan

**Force protection
Soldiers practice
marksmanship
*Page 10***



Spc. Chris Stump

From the mouths of babes

Sgt. Jon Yacapraro, Task Force 168, talks with a group of children near Jagi while on convoy operations with the Gardez Provincial Reconstruction Team's Civil Affairs Team-Alpha. Yacapraro is an infantry team leader with TF 168, a unit assigned as force protection to many PRTs throughout Afghanistan.

Contents



A TF 168 Soldier fires an M-9 pistol during a "stress shoot" at the Gardez Provincial Reconstruction Team. The range was set up to more closely simulate a combat situation in order to improve the marksmanship skills of the force protection Soldiers at the PRT.

See cover story Page 10

Spc. Chris Stump

Page 3: Camp Lejeune-based Marines head home as Hawaii-based Marines assume authority

Page 4: Kabul Compound troops donate school supplies to local children ▶



Page 5: Sharana PRT site dedicated to fallen force protection Soldier

Page 6: Native Americans share culture with Coalition at Bagram

Page 7: Soldier gets Thanksgiving greeting from President Bush



Page 8: Spotlight on... JLC ensures every Coalition member has what it takes to stay in fight

◀ **Page 9:** Btry. F, 7th FA Rgt., conducts live fire, show of force

Page 11: Bagram Air Base's Adopt-a-Village program resumes ▶

Page 12: 'Little Big Town' and Army Materiel Command Band 'Safe to Semi' play for deployed personnel



Page 13: Safeguarding the Coalition: Use proper hearing protection to prevent irreversible damage

Page 14: New campaign offers commander's coin as incentive for IED information

Page 15: Letter to the editor, 'Commitment' essay contest winner

Freedom Watch

Freedom Watch falls under the supervision of the Combined Forces Command – Afghanistan, and is published weekly.

CFC-A Commander – Lt. Gen. David Barno
Public Affairs Officer – Col. Tom R. MacKenzie

Freedom Watch, an Army publication, is published each Sunday by the 17th Public Affairs Detachment at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan. Printed circulation is 6,000 copies per week.

In accordance with AR 360-1, this Army newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military overseas.

Contents of the *Freedom Watch* are not necessarily the official view of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Army.

Deadline for submissions is 0730 Zulu each Friday. All submissions are subject to editing by the 17th Public Affairs Detachment, located in Bldg. 425, Room 107, Bagram Air Base. We can be reached at DSN 318-231-3338.

Freedom Watch Staff

Commander – Maj. Steven J. Wollman
NCOIC – Staff Sgt. Monica R. Garreau
Editor – Sgt. Stephanie L. Carl
Journalists – Sgt. Frank Magni,
Sgt. Jennifer S. Emmons, Spc. Dijon Rolle,
Spc. Cheryl Ransford, Spc. Chris Stump

Visit the CENTCOM Web site at www.centcom.mil and click on the *Freedom Watch* or Forces in Afghanistan link at the bottom of the page to get to the *Freedom Watch*. To be added to the weekly distribution list, e-mail carls@baf.afgn.army.mil.

Marines conduct transfer of authority

Outgoing N.C. battalion provides seamless transition for replacements

Story by Spc. Dijon Rolle
17th Public Affairs Detachment

JALALABAD PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAM, Afghanistan — Hawaii-based 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, deployed to Afghanistan in November. But long before any change of responsibility took place, their predecessors, 3rd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, started to lay the groundwork for a smooth transition.

It's was an eventful six months for the Marines of Company I, 3rd Bn., 6th Marines, in Jalalabad. Members of the North Carolina-based Marine battalion witnessed first-hand the country's first democratic presidential election and worked hard to conduct effective combat operations and maintain a constant presence in the local community.

Now, as they prepare to return home to Camp Lejeune, the Marines of Co. I are working to ensure their transition with the Marines from Co. L, 3rd Bn., 3rd Marines, is seamless.

"This is extremely important that we take the time to do this," said Marine Staff Sgt. Daral Harrison, Co. I, 3rd Bn., 6th Marines, platoon sergeant.

"It sets the next group of Marines up for success, and it relieves a lot of pressure off of them. Making sure all of their equipment is to standard and ready to go is the last thing they should have to worry about when they get here," he said.

The outgoing Marines spent their final days in Afghanistan not only preparing their own equipment for the journey home, but seeing that everything from ammunition to sleeping cots was in good repair and ready for use by their replacements.

The Hawaii Marines said they are excited to be here and look forward to taking over where the 3rd Bn., 6th Marines, left off.

"We plan to continue to build upon the good order and success of (3rd Bn., 6th Marines)," said 2nd Lt. Caleb Weiss, Co. L, 3rd Bn., 3rd Marines, platoon commander.

"We're ready to get started. It's exciting for us to be here and be a part of the ongoing mission to provide peace and stability to the country of Afghanistan," he said.



Spc. Chris Stump

Marine 1st Lt. Luke Hardison, Co. K, 3rd Bn., 6th Marines, platoon commander, talks with an Afghan man via an interpreter about possible enemy activity near Khowst while his radio operator, Marine Pfc. Jeremy Keller, Co. K, 3rd Bn., 6th Marines, calls back to their operations center at FOB Salerno. The 3rd Bn., 6th Marines, were instrumental in providing security and intelligence gathering during their deployment.

It's a mission the Marines want to be a part of.

"I asked to go," said Marine Cpl. Joel Reynolds, Co. L, 3rd Bn., 3rd Marines. "I had to compete with three other corporals for this deployment, and I extended by three months to come over here. The military has an obligation to be here in order to help bring democracy into this country. We have to be here to help protect the people and back the government."

Weiss agreed that a well-coordinated handover was essential for units redeploying and those deploying onto the battlefield.

"We don't want any interruptions in operational tempo," said Weiss. "We want to be ready for any mission, the moment we hit the ground."

This is the first major deployment to Afghanistan for the Hawaii-based Marines. They are scheduled to remain in Afghanistan for a six-month rotation before returning to Hawaii. The Camp Lejeune-based 3rd Bn., 6th Marines, has been on regularly scheduled deployments to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom since 2001.

The official transfer of authority ceremony was at Forward Operating Base Salerno Nov. 25. The headquarters of 3rd Bn., 3rd Marines, is based there, with Marines spread throughout Combined Task Force Thunder's area of operations in eastern Afghanistan, which includes the Jalalabad Provincial Reconstruction Team.



Marine Lance Cpl. Rich Mattingly

Marine Lt. Col. Norm Cooling, 3rd Bn., 3rd Marines., commander, uncases the battalion's colors during a transfer of authority ceremony Nov. 25 at FOB Salerno.

Coalition lends time, hearts to Afghans

Story and photo by

Air Force Senior Airman Catharine Schmidt

Combined Forces Command – Afghanistan Public Affairs Office

KABUL, Afghanistan — Outside the gates of Kabul Compound is a world many U.S. service members are not used to. But it is one that the people stationed here have ventured into, lending their time and hearts to the Afghans.

A group of service members assigned to Kabul Compound did just that during a Nov. 11 trip to an all-girl school in nearby Logar province where they handed out backpacks, notebooks, pens and other supplies to the students.

Marine Capt. Rush Filson, Office of Military Cooperation – Afghanistan operations officer, headed up the project and said the mission for the trip was to not only deliver supplies, but to coordinate with the principal, Abdul Nabi, for future deliveries. They also discussed construction of a brand-new school and salary distributions for the teachers.

The supplies donated to the school were from families in the United States informed about Kabul Compound's community relations efforts.

"There is a definite need for supplies here," said Army Chaplain (Capt.) Bill Heisterman, who is deployed from Fort Dix, N.J. "It's amazing to me the difference in standards here. It's very primitive – like going back in time a few hundred years."

Nabi said that he and the rest of the people in the village were very happy to receive support from the military. He hopes that as long as the school is under-equipped, the military will continue to provide support.

There are plans to deliver supplies in the future that will enhance the learning process and support the school's infrastructure, said Filson. Some of those things include chess sets, white boards, chalk boards, globes, textbooks printed in Dari, chairs and desks.

The supplies are funded by the Peter Goodrich Memorial Trust. Goodrich, a childhood friend of Filson, died Sept. 11, 2001, in the second plane that crashed into the World Trade Center.

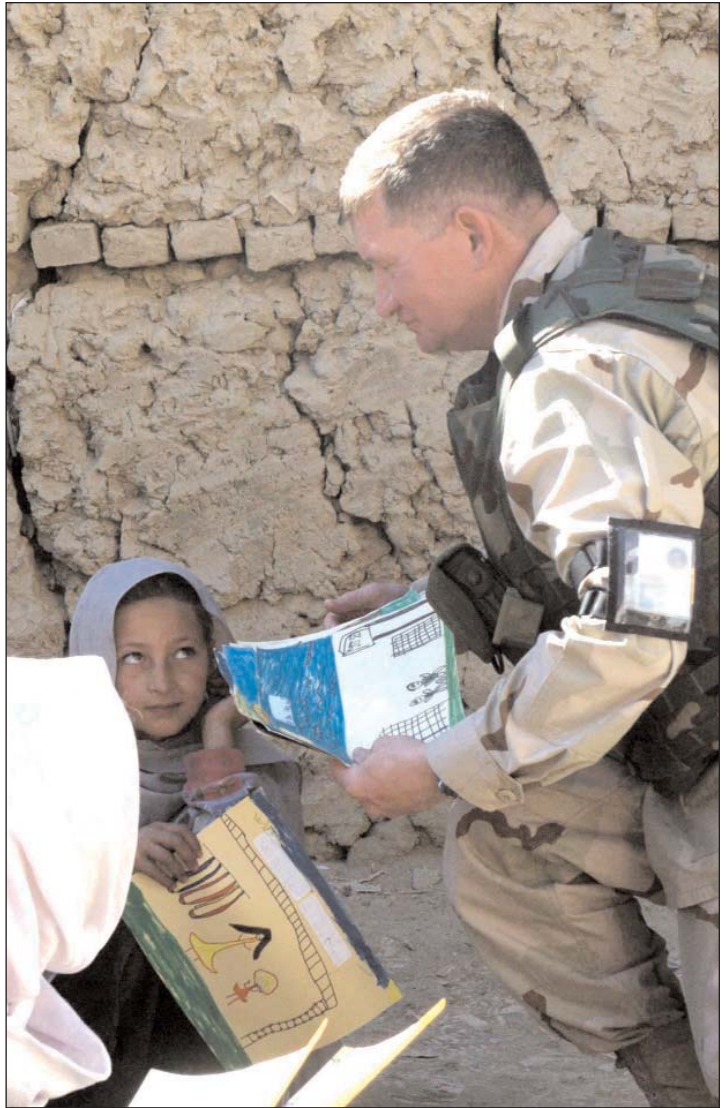
"Originally, the trust was incepted to support scholarships that were in keeping with the ideals Peter would have supported," said Filson, who is deployed from Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay.

"However, his parents thought it appropriate that they divert the funds to help this school (with) learning in the sciences, religion and mathematics – all to benefit humanity as a whole."

Along with the service members, Dr. Larry Butler, a civilian professor from the United States Military Academy at West Point took part in the visit, but he was there for a different mission. His wife is a first-grade teacher in West Point, N.Y., and a recent topic in her classroom has been Afghanistan.

He handed out pictures with notes to the Afghan students which were drawn by his wife's students. Butler told the local students that the first-graders in the United States would love to get replies.

"Hopefully, this will establish a correspondence between the Afghanistan students and the students at West Point," said Butler.



Dr. Larry Butler hands Afghan students pictures drawn by first-graders at the school where his wife teaches in West Point, N.Y., during a humanitarian mission to an all-girl school in Kabul Nov. 11.

Although Filson had been to the school in June, this was the first visit where service members were able to meet and interact with the students.

Because of the Afghan culture, the female students were more comfortable interacting with the female service members, including Spc. Karleta Wheat, a mail handler with Combined Forces Command – Afghanistan.

"The more we interact with the Afghan females is more of an opportunity to bring something different to their lives to show them women can accomplish things," said Wheat.

Spc. Oscar Carrera, a chaplain's assistant, said visiting a school like this reinforces the reasons why service members are serving in the war on terror.

"Something needs to get done here. And I want to be a part of it," he said.

At the end of the visit, the service members all agreed they felt an extreme sense of accomplishment for what they had done.

"They have so little here that any small thing we can do to help is a step forward," said Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Twyla Wigfall, a chaplain's assistant.

Sharana PRT names camp after fallen Soldier

Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. Bradley A. Rhen
CTF Thunder Public Affairs

CAMP KEARNEY, Afghanistan — The Sharana Provincial Reconstruction Team held an opening ceremony Nov. 21 at its new facility, Camp Kearney, which is named in honor of a fallen comrade in arms.

The compound, located near Sharana, the capital of Paktika province, is named for Spc. James Kearney, who died Nov. 1 from injuries he sustained when his convoy was attacked by enemy forces.

Kearney, 22, was a member Company B, 1st Battalion, 168th Infantry Regiment of the Iowa National Guard, and was attached to the Sharana PRT. He was a native of Emerson, Iowa, and deployed to Afghanistan in May.

"This camp has been named after one of our Soldiers, one of our friends, who died for this cause ... of freedom and peace," said Marine Lt. Col. Bill Harkins, PRT commander, to those gathered.

In attendance at the ceremony was a who's who of political and military leaders in Afghanistan, including Zalmay Kalilzad, the United States' ambassador to Afghanistan; Suheila Siddiq, the Afghan minister of health; Muhammad Gulab Mangal, Paktika's governor; Lt. Gen. David Barno, Combined Forces Command — Afghanistan commander; and Maj. Gen. Eric T. Olson, Combined Joint Task Force-

76 commander.

The opening of the PRT, in addition to the success of the Oct. 9 presidential election, marks the beginning of a new political order in Afghanistan, one based on democracy and Afghan traditional values, said Kalilzad.

In the elections, the people of Afghanistan, particularly the people of Paktika province, said no to the law of the gun, no to the politics of intimidation, and no to the rule of warlords, he said.

"This is a hopeful period for Afghanistan," said Kalilzad. "There has been significant progress in the lives of Afghans in the past several years."

Barno said the opening was significant and marked an expansion of the reconstruction efforts in eastern Afghanistan.

"Our hope is that the people here at Paktika province will see a difference in their lives as a result," he said.

Barno noted that experience shows where PRTs go, security follows, setting the stage for economic growth and prosperity.

Mangal agreed, saying the PRT will help the province in reconstruction as



Spc. Charles Daily (left) and Spc. Shawn Parker, both of TF 168, man a guard tower Nov. 21 at the newly-built Sharana PRT compound. TF 168 provides much of the force protection at PRTs throughout Afghanistan.

well as security.

"We will work together, we will bring security, and for the reconstruction of the Paktika province, we will do our job as hard as we can," said Mangal.

The Sharana PRT actually began operating in June from a different facility, while its permanent facility was being built from the ground, up.

The opening of the Sharana PRT brings the number of Coalition PRTs operating in Afghanistan to 13. Two more are scheduled to open in the near future, one each in Lashkar Gar and Tarin Kowt.

Enduring Voices

What personal goals have you attained since deploying?



Spc. Allan Fuhlendorf
Joint Logistics Command
"I have completed college courses toward my degree."



Sgt. Grady Kyle
Trp. D, 3rd Sqdn., 4th Cav. Rgt.
"I have saved money and established a working motor-pool."



Marine Pfc. Gregory Watkins
3rd Bn., 6th Marines
"My wife has started college and I have bought bunkbeds for my kids, and a washer and dryer for my house."



Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Patrick Squires
VAQ-133
"I've lost weight and completed some college courses."



Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. Monica R. Garreau
17th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan — Each April, thousands of Native Americans from the many tribes across the United States meet at the Gathering of Nations Powwow in Albuquerque, N.M.

A similar gathering was held at Bagram Air Base Nov. 27, this one a display of Native American traditions and a bit of the culture in honor of Native American Heritage Month. Although the scale was much smaller, the meaning was the same.

"It was a good way to show other people the culture of Native Americans," said Marine Lance Cpl. Travis Hutchins, Company I, 3rd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, and a member of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina. "They should know about everyone's culture."

The event began with a blessing ceremony conducted by Spc. Robert Nelson, of the Crow Tribe of Montana and Cherokee Tribe of Oklahoma. The room was cleansed with the smoke from burning sweet grass, or sage, an herb considered sacred to many Native Americans. Cleansing, or purification, is called smudging and is used to remove bad feelings, negative thoughts, and evil spirits.

Following the smudging, a short video was shown of prominent Native American actor, writer and Vietnam veteran Jim Northrup of the Anishanabe Tribe of Minnesota.

Then it was Emmett Conrow's chance to



play his flute and share the traditional story of Jumping Mouse, who is on his way to see the mountains when he comes across a dying buffalo and eagle, and offers his eyes so that they can both live. The fable, like many Native American stories, has a very strong moral.

"The moral of the story is, you must make many sacrifices in order to obtain any kind of goodness is life," said Conrow, an audio/visual equipment supervisor for Combined Joint Task Force-76.

Conrow, a member of the Chiricahua-Apache Tribe, chose that particular story because of its meaning to those serving in



(Clockwise from top) Attendees participate in a round dance, a traditional social dance, during the Native American Heritage Month observance Nov. 27. Spc. Robert Nelson (left) and Emmett Conrow share stories over a snack of Indian tacos following the observance. Sgt. Forrest Two Crow (right), a member of the Arikara Nation of North Dakota, teaches Sgt. Maria Gonzalez, 325th CSH, the Kahomni dance.

Operation Enduring Freedom.

"The sacrifices that all of us are making and the goodness we're going to get out of (our time here) and on our own personal experiences," he said.

Then it was time for the dancing portion of the observance. Soldiers from Joint Task Force Wings and 556th Personnel Support Battalion performed the Gourd Dance, which honors past and present warriors.

The round dance was next. All attendees were invited to participate in what is generally considered a fun, social dance. Finally,

See Heritage, Page 14

Soldier gets Thanksgiving Day call from CINC

Story by Master Sgt. Terry Anderson
CJTF-76 Public Affairs Office

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan — Thousands of 25th Infantry Division (Light) Soldiers spent the Thanksgiving holiday away from home, deployed to Afghanistan with Combined Joint Task Force-76 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. One of those Soldiers, a Tropic Lightning infantryman at Kandahar Airfield, got a morale boost with a short phone call from the commander-in-chief.

Sgt. Brendan Kitchens, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment, squad leader, was one of 10 service members worldwide called by President George W. Bush on Thanksgiving Day.

"It's a once in a lifetime opportunity," said Kitchens. "This'll be something to

tell my kids, and something to tell people about for the rest of my life."

Department of Defense officials first contacted CJTF-76 leaders to pick a service member to speak with the president. CJTF-76 Command Sgt. Maj. Franklin G. Ashe in turn called 2nd Bn., 35th Inf. Rgt., leaders to choose a "squared away" Soldier to receive the president's phone call.

Battalion leadership chose Kitchens to represent 2nd Bn., 35th Inf. Rgt., and ultimately, more than 18,000 Coalition troops in Afghanistan.

"I wanted a Soldier who has worked outside the wire the whole time since we've been here," said Ashe. "Kitchens is an outstanding, professional noncommissioned officer."

"They could've chosen anybody," said Kitchens. "I had originally won non-commissioned officer of the quarter for the battalion, and I guess my name just came up.

"Whatever their decision-making process was (to get to talk to the president), I was happy with it. I'm glad I had the opportunity to do it."

The call from President Bush only lasted a minute and a half, but for Kitchens, a 24-year-old from Lawrenceville, Ga., the memory will last a lifetime.

"He called up and basically wanted to wish my family a 'Happy Thanksgiving,'" said Kitchens. "He told (me) we're doing a great job out here, and to keep



"He told (me) we're doing a great job out here, and to keep up the good work."

Sgt. Brendan Kitchens
Co. B, 2nd Bn., 35th Inf. Rgt.

up the good work. I told him we were more than happy to do it."

The phone calls to service members made headlines around the world, prompting CNN to interview Kitchens on live television Nov. 26 to ask him about his experience.

"I was nervous, but they asked me questions like 'What did the president have to say?' and 'How are you guys holding up in Afghanistan?' But the interview went really well," said Kitchens about his five minutes of air time. "My grandparents called all their friends to tell them to watch, and they loved it. (CNN) sent a tape to my wife, which was cool."

Kitchens and his fellow Soldiers have a little less than four months left in Afghanistan. He has taken part in medical assistance missions to Afghan villages, conducted offensive operations near the Pakistan border and provided security for the historic Afghan election.

"We've done a lot here and accomplished a lot," he said. "We're doing good things out here and we're going to be home soon. We're going to get everyone back from here safely."



Sgt. Jeremy Clawson

Sgt. Brendan Kitchens, Co. B, 2nd Bn., 35th Inf. Rgt., hands out coloring books to Afghan children during a humanitarian assistance mission near Kandahar.

PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD

Marines of Co. K, 3rd Bn., 6th Marines, map out a mission in Paktia province. During the Marines' six months of duty throughout Afghanistan, they performed a variety of missions, from combat operations to force protection. The 3rd Bn., 6th Marines, from Camp Lejeune, recently transitioned with 3rd Bn., 3rd Marines, based out of Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay.

Photo by Sgt. Michael Brown, HHC, LTF 725, Gardez PRT

If you have high quality photos of service members supporting the Coalition mission or enjoying well-deserved off-duty time, please e-mail them to carls@baf.afgn.army.mil. Please include full identification and caption information, including who is in the photo and what action is taking place.



Spotlight on Joint Logistics Command

Constant, critical and mission essential

Story by Sgt. Stephanie L. Carl
17th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan — While units rotate in and out of Afghanistan to conduct humanitarian assistance and combat operations, one thing remains constant — the Joint Logistics Command.

The JLC is a permanent fixture in Operation Enduring Freedom, and plays a critical part in every operation.

“We are the only logistics organization in Afghanistan,” said Sgt. 1st Class Christopher J. Clark, noncommissioned officer in charge of JLC operations. “Anything that shoots, moves or communicates comes through us.”

In the last eight months, the Combined Joint Task Force-76 JLC, which is comprised of elements of the 25th Infantry Division (Light) Division Support Command from Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, has made some significant changes to logistics systems in Afghanistan.

“We’ve established the maintenance support teams,” said Clark, who maintains oversight on every aspect of logistics operations.

Four maintenance support teams travel to remote areas throughout the combined joint operations area, repairing equipment and vehicles. This is the first time maintenance support teams have been used in Afghanistan, and they have proven to be indispensable to units at forward operating bases, said Clark. The MSTs are able to repair vehicles on site, increasing operational readiness.

Additionally, the JLC has introduced the containerized delivery system, which allows service members to receive supplies more efficiently in remote locations.

“Members of our rigging team prepare containers of supplies, load them onto an aircraft, and then the containers are dropped out of the aircraft,” said Clark.

Another new concept introduced by the JLC, and probably most appreciated by the troops, is the 21-day menu, which will present a differing food selection to troops in Afghanistan. Most of this food will also be fresh, rather than the pre-packaged rations most meals currently consist of. The program, which is being introduced at Bagram Air Base, will gradually spread throughout the CJOA.

Fuel storage capacity has also increased



Spc. Cheryl Ransford



Sgt. Stephanie L. Carl

Pfc. Roxanne Diaz, a member of LTF 725's rigging team, shrink wraps a pallet of water that was shipped to the Forward Logistics Element in Herat province.

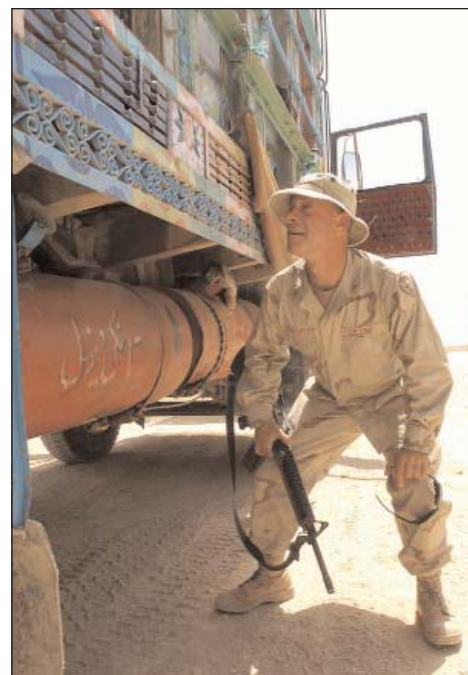
at Bagram, which makes up for the difficulty the Coalition has importing fuel during the winter months. There is also a plan to increase the storage capacity for fuel at Kandahar Airfield.

The JLC supports other expansion projects, as well, including the airfield expansion project at Bagram.

“We’re relocating the (ammunition supply point) and increasing its storage capacity, allowing units to have better access to the supplies they need,” said Clark.

Each of these improvements collectively add to the accomplishment of the mission in Afghanistan, said Col. Richard Hatch, 25th ID (L) DISCOM commander, and the previous JLC commander.

“Nobody would be able to accomplish their individual mission without the support from everyone in the JLC,” said Hatch as he introduced his successor,



Sgt. Frank Magni

Above: Sgt. Eric Schwartz, HHC, 2nd Bn., 35th Inf. Rgt., searches a “jingle truck” before it enters Kandahar Airfield. The trucks, operated by local contractors through the coordination of JLC units, are one of the main methods of moving supplies throughout Afghanistan.

Top: Sgt. Matthew Targgart (left) and 1st Lt. Jose Carmona, LTF-524, prepare to slingload ammunition at FOB Salerno to be taken forward to troops.

See *JLC*, Page 9



Photos by Sgt. Frank Magni

Above: Sgt. Ricardo Tucker, Btry. F, 7th Field Artillery Rgt., sets off quadrant and deflection on his M-198 howitzer during a live-fire exercise at FOB Salerno.

Right: A M-198 howitzer fires in a live-fire exercise conducted with Marine forward observers. During this exercise, artillerymen displayed a show of force while honing gunnery team skills.



FOB Salerno live-fire nets multiple results

Story by Staff Sgt. Bradley A. Rhen
CTF Thunder Public Affairs Office

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO, Afghanistan — One exercise, three results.

To the Soldiers of Battery F, 7th Field Artillery Regiment, the live-fire exercise held here Nov. 20 was a chance for them to hone their skills as artillerymen.

For the Marines of 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, it was a chance to practice their call for fire skills, this time with an Army artillery battery sending rounds downrange. The battalion was conducting a relief-in-place with their predecessors from 3rd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, as the latter prepared to redeploy to Camp Lejeune, N.C.

And for everyone in the immediate vicinity of the base, including those who might

oppose the Coalition, the exercise was a show of force, not to be forgotten anytime soon.

With six M-198 155 mm howitzers standing ready at all times, Btry. F, 7th FA Rgt., is capable of accurately hitting targets well over 10 kilometers away.

The exercise was an opportunity for the artillerymen to maintain their skills and keep from getting complacent, said 1st Lt. David O'Leary, a platoon leader for Btry. F.

Just by the nature of the exercise, it is a show of force, he added.

Anyone who's ever been near a 155mm howitzer when it fires knows what O'Leary is talking about.

"It demonstrates to the local populace what we can provide, and gives them a little bit of security. And I think for the enemy, it's going to make them think twice about attacking the base," he said.

For the Soldiers of Btry. F manning the guns, the mission was exactly what they had trained for — wait for the firing data to come in from the fire control center, set it on the howitzer, and rain steel down on the target.

"This is what these guys are trained to do. It's a pretty standard shoot, and nothing these guys haven't done before," said O'Leary.

Working with the Marines that Btry. F will be supporting was an important part of the live fire.

This exercise gave the fires section from 3rd Bn., 3rd Marines, a chance to actually conduct a live fire shoot with Btry. F, while members of the 3rd Bn., 6th Marines, watched over their shoulders, said Marine Gunnery Sgt. Daniel Jackson, an artillery liaison for 3rd Bn., 6th Marines.

"Everybody's got to practice what they do, so when they need it, it works," he said.

JLC: Keeps Coalition supplied, ready to meet mission

continued from Page 8

Col. Dave McKenna.

Hatch has returned to Schofield Barracks to resume his role as the DISCOM commander and facilitate the return of more than 10,000

Soldiers from Iraq and Afghanistan.

In the meantime, McKenna has ensured JLC operations continue seamlessly, fully aware of the important role his logisticians play in Operation Enduring Freedom.

"The JLC has the largest and most complex presence of theater support structure currently deployed in a combat zone," said McKenna. "Everyone in the JLC has adapted remarkably to the challenges they face in this

environment, and they are based right out there with the troops fighting.

"And their rapid response and personal relationships they develop have translated visions into a tactical success."

Accuracy under pressure goal of stress shoot

Story and photos by Spc. Chris Stump
17th Public Affairs Detachment

GARDEZ PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAM, Afghanistan — It wasn't the average day at the range.

This range had Soldiers integrating shooting and moving into one task.

It was all part of a "stress shoot," a range designed to add adrenaline to the task of rifle marksmanship.

"The stress shoot simulates, as best we can, the combat situation, without actually having rounds coming back at you," said Sgt. Jon Yacapraro, Task Force 168, Gardez Provincial Reconstruction Team force protection, team leader.

"The whole idea is to get their heart rate

up and still have them engage targets with accuracy," he said.

The combat simulation involved negotiating a 15-target course in as little time as possible, while engaging each target with two rounds. A magazine change was thrown in at the midpoint to more realistically simulate a real situation.

After performing pushups to increase their heart rates, the Soldiers locked and loaded their weapons while running to the firing line.

The stations of the course involved engaging targets from the prone position, behind low and high walls, engaging targets while moving, and negotiating a simulated hallway.

"When you're out there for real, you don't have time to set up a nice supported position while someone's shooting at you," said Spc. William Hanson, TF 168, Gardez PRT force protection.

"On this range, we're firing while we're moving and shooting around obstacles, something that's important to have a good feel for," he said.

Moving and shooting effectively is something that saves lives in combat, something Yacapraro wanted his men to get used to.



Above: Pfc. Loren Strong, TF 168, Gardez PRT force protection, engages targets at close range while moving through the last portion of the stress shoot range.

Top: Spc. William Hanson, TF 168, Gardez PRT force protection, shoots over a simulated low wall on the range.



Pfc. Jeremy Kretz, TF 168, Gardez PRT force protection, locks a fresh magazine into his M249 SAW at the mid point of the course.

"It's designed to put a little extra stress on you and get your adrenaline pumping, and still allow yourself to accurately engage targets," he said.

Shooting while stressed, fatigued or on an adrenaline rush didn't prove as accurate as on a slow-fire range, but the Soldiers felt like it was far more beneficial than the average range where Soldiers typically fire 40 rounds from stationary positions.

"It's getting us ready for an actual situation," said Pfc. David McChesney, TF 168, Gardez PRT force protection.

"Slow-fire ranges don't have the adrenaline factor the stress fires have," he said.

Keeping adrenaline in check and accurately engaging targets as fast as possible was the primary focus of the range.

"Ranges like this definitely make you acquire targets faster and make you a better shooter for a combat situation," said McChesney. "Everyone can benefit from a range like this."

In a place where the Soldiers never know what they'll encounter next, getting training that goes above and beyond the average session is vital to staying alive on missions.

"It's always important to brush up on your combat skills," said Hanson. "You never know when you're going to need them out here."

Airmen revive Adopt-a-Village program

Story and photos by
Air Force Staff Sgt. Jennifer Lindsey
455th Expeditionary Operations Group

BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan — Afghan children and adults of three local villages swarmed the Airmen bearing gifts Nov. 17-18. The two days of deliveries marked the revival of Bagram Air Base's Adopt-a-Village program.

To create more room for the almost daily arrival of clothing, toy and school supply donations from people worldwide, the program kicked off with three distribution missions in two days.

Airmen convoyed with eight full-sized pickup loads of goods to the mountain villages of Kharoti and Dorani, and to the town of Jangadam on the first day. They went to the nearby town of Hasankheyl on the second day.

Payloads included 50 bags of clothing, a pallet of drinking water, 40 personal hygiene kits, 25 blankets, and enough notebooks, pencils, pens, crayons and glue for more than 100 children.

The day may have seemed chaotic to many of the Airmen handing out items, but the excitement was understandable. It was the end of Eid al Fitr, the celebratory period following the month-long fasting of Ramadan.

In addition, people here can't simply drive to the local store for new shoes, pain reliever or pencils. The nearest shopping area to Kharoti and Dorani is a more than 13-kilometer hike through a rocky, dry and barren desert. Also, many of the locals who live in towns don't have the money for such "luxuries."

"It was a culture shock for me to see the

way people here live," said Air Force Senior Airman April Siler, 455th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron supply. "It felt good to be able to share the things we could."

For nearly two years, deployed troops have distributed food and clothing, and medical technicians have provided field treatment to the locals through Bagram Air Base's Adopt-a-Village program. Also, with the opening of more schools for girls and boys in the past year, program coordinators encourage donations of sporting goods and academic supplies.

Deliveries were put on hold through the summer and early autumn, however, as force protection issues increased with the approaching date of Afghanistan's first presidential election in October.

With the successful completion of the presidential election, service members have resumed distribution with a new vigor.

Although the visits may be done with good will in mind, traveling "outside the wire" doesn't happen on a whim. Adopt-a-Village visits are well-planned operations. The Air Force Office of Special Investigations works closely with village elders and Afghan police and military commanders to ensure U.S. troops' safety. In addition to determining a detailed mission plan that includes security forces posting guard, OSI requests the villages also provide security during the visit.

"It was an incredible experience," said Air Force Staff Sgt. Christy Sullivan, 455th Expeditionary Support Squadron services noncommissioned officer in charge.

"I got exactly what I volunteered for, to see children's smiling faces and to help little kids here feel good for a while," she said.

Some deployed members have forgone personal Christmas gifts, opting for the gift of giving instead. Air Force Lt. Col. Daniel Digger Hawkins' family residing in Michigan, California, New York, Florida, Oregon, Rhode Island, Virginia, and West Virginia are investing the



A young Kharoti villager shares the candy he just received from Air Force Staff Sgt. Michael McLaughlin, 455th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Flight engineering assistant, Nov. 17.

money that would have been spent on goodies for each other to purchase school supplies and toys for local children.

The benefits of the Adopt-a-Village program are mutual. It offers a venue for Americans to interact with Afghans. It also goes hand-in-hand with the overall mission here — to help rebuild the nation and to establish peace and stability throughout the region, said Air Force Master Sgt. Robert Nolen, 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron patrol master.

While Airmen handed out toys and supplies to children, Air Force Senior Airman Jason Weiss worked at helping ailing villagers. In three hours, the 455th EOG medical technician evaluated and provided field treatment for more than 60 men and children.

"My goal is the same as the overall military goal here — leave it better than we found it," said Weiss.

The hope is that the recent successful presidential election will help the nation to continue to move forward in quality-of-life improvements, including the rebuilding of clean wells, safe roads, hospitals, and schools for girls and boys. Until then, programs such as Adopt-a-Village will continue their outreach to provide whatever relief possible to the local population.



Air Force Airman 1st Class Angelique Smith, 455th EOG, passes out coloring pencils and notebooks to young Kharoti villagers during an Adopt-a-Village visit Nov. 17.

'Little Big Town,' 'Safe to Semi' play for Coalition

Armed Forces Entertainment brought in the two bands to entertain Coalition personnel serving throughout Afghanistan Thanksgiving week as part of its constant efforts to provide troops much deserved morale, welfare and recreational activities.



Sgt. Christopher Morrison, one of 'Safe to Semi's' guitarists, gets into the music while entertaining the residents of Bagram Air Base Nov. 23 at the clamshell.



Photos By Spc. Chris Stump

Above: Little Big Town performs for Coalition personnel at Bagram Air Base Nov. 24 during their tour through the area of operations.



Left: Phillip Sweet of Little Big Town plays his guitar during the group's performance.



'Safe to Semi' lead vocalist Spc. John Lindsay (right) and Spc. Mike Levero fire up the crowd with one of many rock songs the band played Nov. 23 at the clamshell on Bagram.

The crowd applauds 'Little Big Town' after one of their songs. The group spent Thanksgiving week playing for troops throughout Afghanistan.



Wear ear protection now to hear later

Safeguarding the Coalition

Story and photo by
Spc. Cheryl Ransford
17th Public Affairs Detachment

AFGHANISTAN — Most injuries that occur in a combat zone are treated as they happen. But not all injuries are apparent — some are painless and compound over time.

Hearing loss is one of those long-term, irreversible injuries. It's also one of the most preventable.

"Most injuries to hearing come from everyday activities that most people don't realize will harm them, such as listening to loud music on a radio or through headphones," said Maj. Virginia DeSwarte, 325th Combat Support Hospital Preventive Medicine officer in charge.

Even though being in combat means operating around loud noises from generators, aircraft and other machinery, not to mention weapons fire, there are some things service members can do to lessen the chance of having their hearing permanently damaged.

"Before using hearing protection, people should see if there is any way for them to move away from the source of the noise, or to see if there is any way to isolate the noise," said DeSwarte.

If the noise level can't be reduced, and personnel are exposed to loud noise more than 85 decibels for extended periods of time, they need to wear the appropriate type of hearing protection, said Marine Staff Sgt. Dan Demuro, Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 773 ordnance staff noncommissioned officer in charge.

Normal conversation is about 60 decibels, and a standard gas-powered lawn mower is approximately 107 decibels, meaning that a machine with an output of 85 decibels would fall somewhere in the middle.

"The type of protection used varies based on the work that is being done. If someone is doing construction work, such as using a saw or a drill, ear plugs should (provide) sufficient protection. But pilots and crew chiefs need to wear the proper helmets with built in hearing protection,"



Jerry Jones, a Kellogg, Brown and Root carpenter, wears proper hearing protection while he cuts a piece of plywood with a table saw in the KBR wood shop on Bagram Air Base. Ear protection should always be worn when working with anything that generates more than 85 decibels, or permanent damage to hearing can occur.

he said.

Hearing protection is a must for personnel who are required to work around loud noises, even just occasionally. Because unlike many other injuries, hearing loss cannot be restored.

All leaders need to ensure those in their charge are taking the steps necessary to protect irreplaceable assets like their hearing. But as with everything in the military, everyone is responsible for safety. Any individual who believes their work envi-

"If service members take the necessary precautions, hearing loss should not be an injury they have to worry about."

ronment exceeds safe sound standards should consult with a unit safety representative.

Leaders and their subordinates not taking simple steps to protect hearing can lead to irreversible damage.

"Hearing loss is caused by the small hairs on the inside of the inner ear being destroyed," said DeSwarte of the small hairs inside the ear that control the sense of sound.

"Once the hairs are gone, they can't be replaced," she said.

Limiting time around loud noises can be one of the biggest factors in saving one's hearing, said DeSwarte.

"According to (Occupational Health and Safety Administration) standards, anyone working around sounds at 85 decibels should be in the environment for no more than eight hours," she said. "As the volume goes up, the amount of time around the source of the noise should be shortened."

Limiting exposure to noise and taking proper precautions will almost always help personnel retain their sense of sound. The military has made protecting troops' hearing easy by placing output warnings on all its equipment and in all equipment manuals. Most supply sections also have an adequate stock of earplugs for their personnel.

"Hearing loss is permanent, and can't always be corrected with hearing aids. Everyone needs to ensure they are protecting their hearing," said DeSwarte.

"Being a Soldier requires being able to hear," she said. "If service members take the necessary precautions, hearing loss should not be an injury they have to worry about."

CJTF-76 begins incentive program for reporting IEDs

Story by Sgt. Stephanie L. Carl
17th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan — As Coalition forces expand their reach across Afghanistan, anti-Coalition militants are becoming increasingly restricted in their ability to move.

This restriction is forcing the ACMs to rely on indirect methods of attack, namely improvised explosive devices, which pose a significant threat to Coalition forces and local nationals alike.

To combat this problem, Combined Joint Task Force-76 has launched a program designed to reward individuals for their efforts in eliminating the threat of IEDs.

“People like to receive recognition for the things they do,” said Brig. Gen. Bernie Champoux, CJTF-76 deputy commanding general, operations. “We’re making a concerted effort to do what we can to protect our troops, and this is just another facet of that.”

The other “facet” is the new IED commander’s coin, which is awarded to any individual who assists in thwarting an IED attack, or in some way helps in the campaign to prevent IED attacks.

Featuring an eagle clutching an IED in its talons, the coin represents the United States and the removal of IEDs, said 2nd Lt. Scott Chalmers, Co. A, 125th Military Intelligence Battalion, executive officer, and the artist behind the design.

“I hope this coin motivates people to report IEDs,” he said.

The coin is part of the Coalition’s small rewards program, which is used to reward Afghans for their efforts in preventing IED attacks. In the past, the small rewards pro-

gram has compensated civilians monetarily for the information they provide.

The local population is one of the biggest sources of information about IEDs, said Lt. Col. Scott Berrier, CJTF-76 director of intelligence.

“It’s important for units to establish a good relationship with the people in the villages,” he said.

Fostering good relationships can encourage the local nationals to report suspicious activity, and it can help save a service member’s life.

Additionally, units should rely heavily upon intelligence assets, which can provide current threat information, to include types of IED threats and known high-risk areas.

The two types of IED threats are command-detonated and passive. A command-detonated device is typically controlled by the enemy, while a passive device is planted and then left behind. A passive device poses more of a threat to the general population, as there is no specific target for the detonation.

The best way for service members to avoid either of these devices is by remaining vigilant during missions.

“Soldiers know what the roads are supposed to look like,” said Berrier. “If something doesn’t look right, it should be approached with extreme caution.”

Reporting those suspicious objects can be what saves the lives of service members.

When a service member sees something that doesn’t look right, they should report



Spc. Chris Stump

Marines patrol a road near Khowst village keeping an eye out for suspicious activity. Troops on patrol, mounted and dismounted, need to be especially aware of the threat of IEDs to themselves and their battle buddy. As an added incentive, CJTF-76 is awarding an IED coin to those who aid in preventing IED attacks.

it through their chain of command, said Berrier. Explosive ordnance disposal teams or engineers who are trained to destroy explosives should be called in to handle the situation.

Troops who do the right thing can receive the IED coin for their efforts. Upon approval from a service member’s chain of command, Maj. Gen. Eric T. Olson, CJTF-76 commander, will present the coin, which bears the two-star flag, to uniformed individuals who take action against IEDs.

In the past, only civilians were able to receive rewards for contributing to the destruction of an IED, but the coin is just an added incentive for troops. It can never replace the ultimate incentive — a battle-buddy.

“The primary motivator for anyone is their battle-buddy,” said Champoux. “Nothing will ever replace that.”

“This is just another mechanism. The leaders who feel the most responsible don’t ever want to look in the mirror and think they could have tried harder.”

Heritage: Native Americans share culture with others

continued from Page 6

more audience participation was necessary for the Kahomni dance, a couple’s dance, similar to a country two-step, as those familiar with the steps taught their partner.

After the observance, attendees were invited to share in cultural food sampling, including Indian tacos, a favorite among Native Americans, made with traditional fry bread and taco fixings. Displays honoring Native American warriors past and present, and maps depicting the location of the many tribes of North America were also set up.

Marine Lance Cpl. Tim McKiernan, Co. I, 3rd Bn., 6th Marines, said he learned a lot about Native Americans during the observance. He especially liked the story telling and the food, but also

took the time to learn about the various traditional dances.

The observance was a good opportunity to learn about someone else’s culture, while also “reminding us of our roots,” he said.

Education and togetherness are what it’s all about, said Conrow. “Any chance we get to share our culture with anybody is great,” he said.

Although the gathering was a bit low-key, the chance to gather was not diminished.

“It’s always a good thing, no matter how small it is,” said Sgt. Wade Tiokasin, a member of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe of North Dakota.

“It’s good to see that even here in this environment, in another country, when a ceremony like this comes up, that it’s still the same like it would be back home. The spirit never changes.”

Dear Editor**Remember the real enemy**

No matter where you stand on whether or not the war was justified, we must never forget the service men and women who paid the ultimate sacrifice, and the thousands of others who have been wounded.

We must remember the extreme sacrifices military families are making, particularly the ultimate sacrifice of the loss of a loved one.

It is tragic enough when a war is fought clearly to defend our country, as was evident after Sept. 11, 2001, when our focus was an al-Qaeda terrorist threat.

But the Taliban and bin Laden are not Afghanistan. They're not even the government of Afghanistan. The Taliban are a cult of ignorant psychotics who took over Afghanistan in 1997.

Bin Laden is a political criminal with a plan. When you think Taliban, think Nazis. When you think bin Laden, think Hitler.

Afghan people had nothing to do with this monstrous act. They are the first victims of the perpetrators. Afghanistan is a third world country with no economy, and no food. The soil is littered with land mines. Some Afghan people welcome us here to take out the Taliban and clear out the rats' nest of international thugs holed up in their country.

Thousands of American and Afghan Soldiers are hunting for Osama bin Laden.

Bin Laden has a lot of holes in which he hides, and eventually we will poke our head into the right one. Sooner or later, we will get him.

(Editor's Note: This letter is the personal opinion of the author and does not necessarily reflect the official view of the U.S. government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Army.)

Staff Sgt. Lynn Irvin

HHC, Joint Logistics Command

Essay: Commitment is...

This essay is the winner of the values essay contest for "Commitment."

Commitment is: dedication to a cause or policy, a pledge or undertaking, an engagement or obligation that restricts freedom of action. It's an agreement to perform a particular activity at a certain time in the future under certain circumstances. When I was asked to write a paper on commitment I thought of many different aspects of my life.

Throughout life I have been committed to so many different things. I think true commitment is the kind that's around for a long time. When I think about commitment, a lot of things come to mind. The four main things in my life that I am committed to are God, the Marine Corps, my wife and my health.

Committing myself to God was the all time biggest commitment I've ever made. It was so huge, because I knew it would change my life forever and that it would truly be a life-long commitment. The best thing about that commitment is that I knew on the day that God would also commit himself to me for the rest of my life! That's more than I could ever ask of another human being.

The second big commitment in my life is my commitment to the Marine Corps. After trying college, I decided that it was best for me to join the Marines for five years. I knew that from that day forward, I was going to be committed to the Marines and everything they stand for. I wanted to make a difference by serving the country that I love. Today, sitting in Afghanistan, I realize that's exactly what I'm doing and I'm proud that I made that commitment. I made it

because I believed in it and I wanted to make a difference. I wouldn't have it any other way.

The third commitment that came to my mind was the commitment I have for my wife and our marriage. On Dec. 15, 2002, I stood at the altar with my wife and committed the rest of my life to her and our marriage.

I knew it wouldn't always be easy, but that it was what I wanted to do. Almost two years later I know that commitment is the key to marriage and that you can never give up.

If it weren't for mine and my wife's commitment to our marriage, then we wouldn't be able to get through these deployments at all. It takes lots of work, but it is totally worth it.

The last thing that comes to my mind was the commitment I have for my health. In life, we are only given one body, and I think that it is extremely important that we take good care of it.

I try to eat healthy and go to the gym at least once a day. I think I owe it to myself, and I know that it will pay off in the long run. Taking care of your body when you are young helps to ensure a long healthy life in the future. Working out not only keeps me healthy, but it makes me feel good about myself.

Writing this paper has reminded me of how many things I am committed to and that I need to stay focused to be successful. I believe that you can do anything you want, given enough hard work and desire.

Marine Cpl. William Stowe
3rd Bn., 6th Marines

Letters to the Editor

The *Freedom Watch* would like to publish your opinions on topics of importance and interest to those serving in OEF.

Please send your thoughts in letter form to the editor. All letters e-mailed must include full name, unit, address and, when possible, telephone number. We will not print anonymous letters. Please limit all letters to 200 words or less.

We reserve the right to edit letters for length, clarity and decorum.

Please avoid implying criticism of U.S. or DoD policies and programs, advocating or disputing specific political, diplomatic or legislative matters, or implying criticism of host nation or host nation sensitivities.

Please send your letters to:
carls@baf.afgn.army.mil

We look forward to hearing from you!

OEF "Values" Essay Contest

All personnel serving in Afghanistan are invited to participate in the Operation Enduring Freedom bi-monthly "Values" Essay Contest sponsored by CJTF-76.

The current value is "**Selfless Service**."

Rules

- ☐ Essays should include the definition of the featured value and your own experience(s) that reinforce this value
- ☐ Essays will be at least one and no more than two pages (typed/neatly printed and double-spaced)
- ☐ Please include a cover page with Title, Author's Name, Supervisor's Name, Unit/Organization, Phone Number and e-mail address if available
- ☐ Do not put name directly on essay
- ☐ Submit essays to EO Adviser nearest your location, via e-mail or hard copy by **Dec. 25**.

The winning essay writer will receive a Commanding General's Certificate of Achievement and other prizes to be announced. The essay will also be published in a future issue of the *Freedom Watch*, and in the bi-monthly EO Update.

EO is also looking for E-7s and above to help review essay submissions and select the winning essay.

Call the Bagram EO Senior Adviser at DSN 318-231-3021 for more information.

Freedom Watch

December 12, 2004



Fitness